

MUMPS

What is mumps? Mumps is an acute viral disease characterized by fever and swelling or tenderness of one or more of the salivary glands.

Who gets mumps? Although older people may contract the disease, mumps usually occurs in children between the ages of 5 and 14. Mumps occurs less regularly than other common childhood communicable diseases. Mumps cases are reported throughout the year, but tend to peak in late winter and spring.

How is mumps spread? Mumps is spread by airborne transmission with mucus or droplets from the nose or throat of an infected person, usually when a person coughs or sneezes. Although persons who do not have symptoms can transmit the virus if infected, no carrier state is known to exist.

What are the symptoms of mumps? Symptoms of mumps include fever, headache, and swelling of one or more of the salivary glands, usually the parotid gland (located just below the front of the ear). Approximately one-third of infected people do not exhibit symptoms. The disease can lead to hearing loss, meningitis (infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord), and swollen testicles in males who have reached puberty.

How soon after infection do symptoms occur? The incubation period is usually 16 to 18 days, although it may vary from 12 to 25 days.

What is the treatment for mumps? There is no specific treatment for mumps. Supportive care should be given as indicated.

How long is an infected person able to spread mumps? Mumps is contagious three days before to nine days after the onset of swelling.

Is there a vaccine for mumps? Yes. Two doses of mumps-containing vaccine (MMR) are routinely recommended for all children. The first dose is given on or after the first birthday. The second dose is given at 4 to 6 years of age. Pregnant women and persons with immunosuppression should not receive MMR vaccine. Both doses are recommended for the best prevention.

What can be done to prevent the spread of mumps? The single most effective control measure is maintaining the highest possible level of immunization in the community. Infected individuals should not attend school or work in the

infectious period. Anyone who has not received 2 doses of mumps-containing vaccine (preferably MMR vaccine) should be vaccinated. Persons exposed to mumps should be educated on the signs and symptoms of the disease and should seek health care if symptoms begin.

Where can I get more information?

- ❖ Your personal doctor
- ❖ Your local health department, listed in your telephone directory
- ❖ The Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology at (801) 538 – 6191
- ❖ http://health.utah.gov/epi/fact_sheets/mumps.html
- ❖ http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/submenus/sub_mumps.htm